

CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE

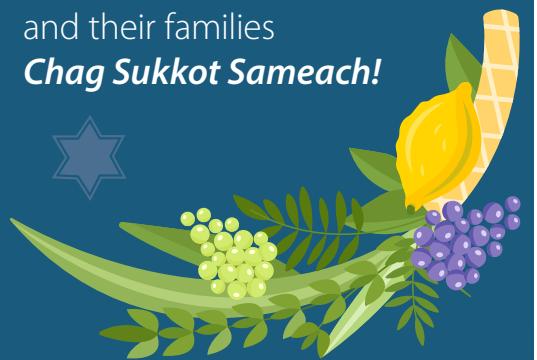
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The Cape Jewish Chronicle
wishes all our readers
and their families
Chag Sukkot Sameach!



PROMINENT *Speakers* engaged with the community at events during September



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OCTOBER 2023

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The thumbnail image shows the front page of the October 2023 issue of the Cape Jewish Chronicle. It features the magazine's logo at the top left, followed by a collage of several small photographs of people, likely speakers or contributors. The text "PROMINENT Speakers engaged with the community at events during September" is overlaid on the collage. At the bottom right of the thumbnail, the number "6" is displayed.



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Bonny's Beat



An example to all of us

Recently, a memory popped into my head that I thought I'd share with you. I recalled my nephew, then aged 9 or 10, coming home and sharing his excitement after having gone off to watch a big international rugby match at the home of a new school friend. He mentioned the names of the others watching the game with him, saying, "Kyle was there, and Robbie, Jason, Raymond, and Chad."

I recognised the names of most of the boys he mentioned but one didn't ring a bell as being from his school class. "Who's Raymond?" I asked. "Oh, he's Robbie's grandfather. He's such a friendly man."

I was shocked because I knew that the grandfather was Raymond Ackerman. How could my 10-year-old nephew call him by his first name? So, I told him that, if he were to see 'Raymond' again, he should call him 'Mr Ackerman'.

I subsequently realised how wrong I was. Raymond Ackerman was a man without airs and graces, a special human being who saw everyone as his equal. And so, it would have been quite natural for him to have introduced himself to the children by his first name – and to be comfortable with them talking to him in an informal way, as if he were just another kid from school.

Since the passing of the late Raymond Ackerman a short while ago, I have heard and read so many positive comments about him. It's clear that he truly was someone who had that unique knack of making everyone feel

important and at ease in his presence, no matter their station in life.

Over and above Raymond's tremendous philanthropy and his leadership in business was his strength as a human being. He epitomised the sort of person we should all strive to be. Thanks, Raymond, for the incredible example you have been to all of us.

While we, sadly, note the passing of a giant in our community, we also welcome new people to leadership roles. And so, in this issue, we announce the appointment of two new senior staff members: Helen Schneider, as Executive Director of the United Jewish Campaign, and Jakub (Kuba) Nowakowski, as the new Director of the Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre.

We also continue with our fairly new focus areas in law, medicine and health, entrepreneurial activities, and books. The Health Focus article this month is particularly interesting: it looks at the high incidence of genetic mutations within the Ashkenazi community, and preventative actions that can be taken.

See also the information about the Mensch Mitzvah Day – a wonderful initiative to get you involved in working to improve the lives of others.

Finally, if you know of something newsworthy within our community, please share the details with the Chronicle, so that we can help to communicate it to others.

Wishing you a good read!



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SHABBAT AND YOM TOV TIMES

DATE	PORTION	CANDLE LIGHTING		ENDS
		earliest	latest	
30 September/ 1 October	16 Tishrei	Succot	19:22	— 19:23
6/7 October	22 Tishrei	Shemini Atzeret	17:34	18:35 —
7/8 October	23 Tishrei	Simchat Torah	19:27	— 19:28
13/14 October	23 Tishrei	Bereshit	17:38	18:40 19:33
20/21 October	6 Cheshvan	Noach	17:43	18:46 19:39
27/28 October	13 Cheshvan	Lech Lecha	17:47	18:52 19:46

UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS



Save the date

COMMUNITY ORGANISATION	EVENT	DATE	FOR MORE INFO
Jacob Gitlin Library	Patricia Schonstein presents The Phoebe Book of Poems for Children	4 October	Page 18
Temple Israel	Simchat Torah Magic	6 & 7 October	Page 16
SAZF Cape Council	Film Club: Apples from the Desert	15 October	Page 13
Astra	Astra Race Day	21 November	Page 30
SA Jewish Museum	Herzlia Matric Art Exhibition	18 October	Page 18
African Renaissance Ensemble	Music Concert: Hidden Treasures of the Hebrew Baroque	28 & 29 October	https://earlymusic.co.za/rossi/
Mensch	Skills Development Lift Leadership	27 August – 29 October	http://mensch.org.za/lift2023/
Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies	Bursary Applications Open	Closes 31 October	Page 9
Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies	2023 Annual AGM & Conference	5 November	Page 25
Israel Centre	Aliyah Expo 2023	CT: 2 Nov – JHB: 5 & 6 Nov	Page 12
Mensch	Mitzvah Day	19 November	Page 19
Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre	Seeing Auschwitz Exhibition	Open until January 2024	https://ctholocaust.co.za/seeing-auschwitz/



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Family Announcement

CONSECRATION

TESSA EPSTEIN

The consecration of the tombstone for the late Tessa Epstein z'l will take place at Pinelands No. 2 Cemetery on Sunday, 22 October, at 10am.

The Epstein family invite all who knew Tessa to join them at the Consecration.

To place a family announcement email: chron@ctjc.co.za



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The passing of a special human being

Reading the many tributes to the late Raymond Ackerman z'l that appeared almost immediately after his passing in early September, one is struck by the fondness with which he was remembered by people from all walks of life. Whether a packer at one of the many Pick n Pay stores, a manager of one of the stores, a leading business figure, or even someone who knew of him and did not actually know him personally, it's clear that Raymond was a giant among human beings.

Noted for his humility and the deep respect he showed to all people, the examples he set for the rest of us are profound: from his approach to leadership in business, to the steadfast nature of his challenges to government in the pursuit of looking after the interests of the consumer, to the way he treated his fellow man.

The way in which he grew the Pick n Pay brand has long been the focus of many an article, but for us it is Raymond

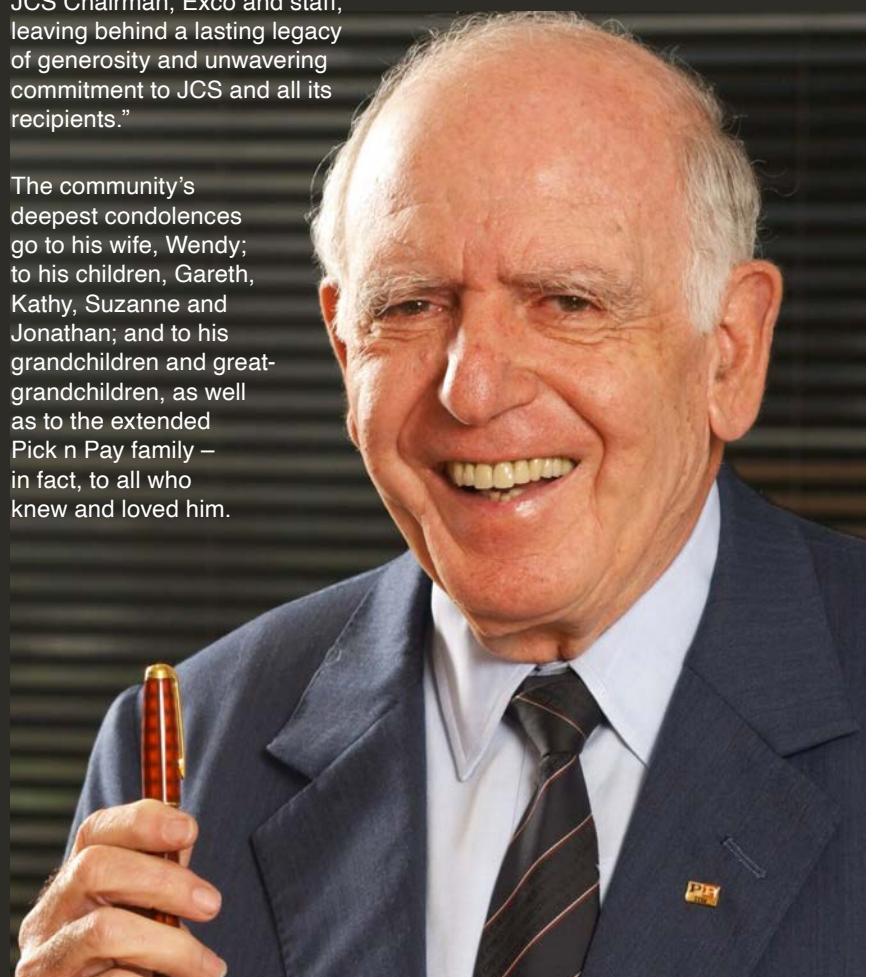
Ackerman's huge generosity as a philanthropist that we acknowledge. Nearly every communal organisation within Cape Town's Jewish community was a beneficiary of his largesse – the Cape Jewish Chronicle included – and this generosity continued over very long periods of time. As outgoing Executive Director of the United Jewish Campaign, Barry Levitt, says: "Raymond supported the Campaign wholeheartedly for many, many years and the impact of his giving cannot be understated."

Hazel Levin, Executive Director of Jewish Community Services Cape Town says:

"Raymond was a remarkable philanthropist who was deeply committed to supporting the indigent and vulnerable members of Jewish Community Services Cape Town. His unwavering dedication and integrity shone brightly, making him a beacon of hope for those in need. He will be sorely missed by the

JCS Chairman, Exco and staff, leaving behind a lasting legacy of generosity and unwavering commitment to JCS and all its recipients."

The community's deepest condolences go to his wife, Wendy; to his children, Gareth, Kathy, Suzanne and Jonathan; and to his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as to the extended Pick n Pay family – in fact, to all who knew and loved him.



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CONNECT, COLLABORATE, COMMUNITY

By DANIEL BLOCH, Executive Director, Cape SAJBD

A FRESH START



Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are now behind us and hopefully we have all been inscribed in the

Book of Life. For the past two Yom Tov editions, I have written about what I am thankful for and also asked the question: *What will your New Year look like?* We have so much to be thankful for and most likely each of our new years will be completely unique. However, what will be similar is that it will hopefully be a fresh start for everyone. An opportunity to hit the reset button and start afresh. Unfortunately, this doesn't apply to bond payments, load shedding and school fees. Fortunately, there is quite a bit which is in our own hands and we can be the masters of our own destiny.

What could this fresh start look like? Perhaps you will start spending more time with your family? Or devoting more time to your career? How about getting into shape for the summer season? (Once my wife sees this, I will have a problem. She will no doubt tell me to eat healthier and exercise more – which will mean a lot more hikes and walks with the dog! They say communal work is about sacrificing for the community – I will literally be giving up morning sleep-ins and late-night snacking. It will be worth it though!)

I think humanity has dropped a few places in the universal rankings – somewhere between animals and meteorites! I know this seems a rather harsh statement; however, after what we have seen happening abroad and at home with protests, kidnappings, killings and the general ill-treatment of human beings to one another, can you blame me for making that statement? There is so much hate in the world nowadays both online

and in-person. However, there are more good people in the world than bad and we have to believe that everyone can change.

As humans, we should all aspire to be better people. But what does a better person look like and how should this better person act? The website www.lifehack.org lists ten ways to become a better person. (I searched Google and there are tons of useful websites, however this one stood out above the rest.)

1. Be willing to change
2. Stop making excuses
3. Stop being angry
4. Be a role model
5. Forgive someone
6. Listen to people
7. Be honest
8. Do something you don't want to
9. Surprise someone special
10. Take good care of yourself.

This list is definitely something which we can all work towards with objectives that are highly achievable.

I would juggle this list slightly. Taking good care of yourself should be top of the list – if you love yourself and you are comfortable in your own skin and you are happy with your life, then you are well placed to help those around you. Stop being angry – life is too short for ferribles. This is definitely something that I am always trying to work on and, whilst I do let small things get to me, for the most part, I am relatively calm. (I may have to rethink this as it's the Rugby World Cup and the Springboks have a tough group to get through – and most of the time the referee is rubbish).

We can all make a fresh start. It's what you do and how you do it which will determine your success. Be good to yourself and be kind to others - unless the referee makes a shocking call, in which case feel free to shout at the TV!



A Month to EMPOWER, ENGAGE, and EDUCATE

By JOSH FRIEDMAN, Programme and Development Manager, Cape SAJBD

August proved to be a month of vibrant activity for the Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies (Cape SAJBD) as we continue our mission to Engage, Empower and Educate. The Cape SAJBD continues to play a pivotal role in safeguarding the interests of Cape Town's diverse and vibrant Jewish community.

EMPOWER



Entrepreneurs' Network Event

On August 30th, the Cape SAJBD, in collaboration with ORT Jet Cape Town, Over the Rainbow, and EO, successfully hosted another Entrepreneurs' Network (EN) event at Deloitte. This event provided a valuable platform for entrepreneurs to connect with prominent business leaders, fostering networking opportunities and knowledge sharing.

The Cape Board was well-represented at this event, with notable individual Dawn Nathan-Jones spearheading the event, and Cape Board members Glen Heneck, Tzvi Brivik, and Rael Kaimowitz participating as Business Leaders supported by David King, Justin Asher, Lynton Cassel and Joshua Friedman. The event, energetically facilitated by expert Consultant and Facilitator, Dillon Jearey, featured rotating sessions, allowing the cohort of entrepreneurs to interact with industry leaders.

Industry leaders represented diverse sectors such as Tech CEOs, Retail CEOs, Business Strategy Consultants, Business Owners, Legal Practitioners, and Consultants. Their presence enriched the event by providing valuable advice and insights, empowering the cohort of entrepreneurs. Glen Heneck, Deputy Chair of the Cape SAJBD and Director at the Melbro Group, described this event and EN as "a powerful antidote to 'Safropessimism'. A wonder institution in the making". The entrepreneurs were equally appreciative with many accolades flowing in: "It's such a privilege and opportunity to be exposed to so many entrepreneurs and industry experts." "Really empowering and insightful." "I wanted to say thank you for a wonderful event yesterday. Thank you so much, it was very inspiring, informative and relevant".



Entrepreneurs' Network Event

ENGAGE



Limmud Conference

On 20th August, the Cape SAJBD took part in the highly anticipated annual Limmud conference hosted at the Gardens Community Centre. Their session, aptly titled "Around the Boardroom Table and Beyond", proved to be an interactive and immersive experience. The event featured group case studies and a panel discussion facilitated by the Cape Board's Executive Director, Daniel Bloch.

The central theme of this session was the impact of recent troubling events on the local Jewish community. Since March, the Cape SAJBD, along with various communal institutions, has been confronted with an increase in anti-Israel and antisemitic incidents. These challenges ranged from protests outside the Gardens Community Centre to calls for

the de-registration of a Jewish day school.

During the session, attendees were divided into groups and presented with case studies, each representing an incident within the community. Each group was tasked with deliberating on how best to respond to these incidents as if they were part of the Board Council. The discussions were not only enlightening but also served as a platform for sharing perspectives and strategies. The feedback from the attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with a community member expressing gratitude for the insight into the complexities of leading a community. The Cape SAJBD emphasised that arriving at the right solution is often a nuanced process, requiring careful deliberation to ensure the correct decision is made.

EDUCATE

On 28th August, the Cape Board collaborated with Herzlia Weizmann Primary to host a special book session titled "Goodnight Golda." This event, tailored for Grade 6 pupils, featured the book's author, Batyah Bricker from

Johannesburg. "Goodnight Golda" is a book that celebrates exemplary Jewish women leaders from around the world, aiming to educate and inspire young minds while highlighting the remarkable contributions of Jewish women to society.



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Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR



Jakub Nowakowski

Cape Town welcomed a new resident to our shores recently. Jakub Nowakowski and his family have settled in the city for Jakub – or Kuba, as he is more commonly known – to take up the reins at the Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre (CTHGC).

Having grown up and lived in Poland for his adult life, Kuba's move to Cape Town represents a significant new chapter in his life - both personally and from a career perspective. He is certainly well-versed in the museum world, having worked at the Galicia Jewish Museum in Kraków, Poland, for the past 15 years, 13 of which were as the Director of the museum.

Raised in Krakow, he has not previously lived in another country, and the move to South Africa implies a new perspective on the teaching of the Holocaust to a different audience from the audiences he is used to. As he says, "I decided to apply for this position because of the similarities in terms of Polish and South African history. We are both nations that need to come to terms with our histories of discrimination, violence and trauma. The Holocaust has so many lessons that are appropriate to both societies, and I will certainly be looking at these lessons within the context of South Africa."

As a youngster growing up in Kazimierz, the former Jewish district of Kraków, Kuba developed an interest in finding out more about the area, which led him to raise questions about why the area

clearly had such a strong Jewish history, yet no Jews. He explains that, "During the Soviet era, the history of the Jews of Poland and the actions of Poles during World War II was not something that was discussed. It was only in the 1990s, once the Soviet era was over and there was more openness in Polish society, that people began to focus on this period of history and to uncover the truth about what happened. Having been born in the 1980s, this meant that I was at an age where I began to question the conventional view of things."

It was against this background that Kuba began to learn more about his country's Jewish history, and which led him to take up Jewish studies at the Jagiellonian University. Ultimately, this drove him into a career in the museum world, specifically with a focus on Jewish history.

Kuba's understanding of the issues in Polish society – and in fact in the wider Eastern European world – will bring an added perspective to his new role.

Having only been in the country for a very short while, he is enthusiastic about the friendliness and warmth of the people he has met thus far. He comments: "I am extremely grateful to Richard Freedman and the staff and volunteers at the Holocaust Centre for taking me into the fold in such a welcoming manner. It's also wonderful to be within such a vibrant Jewish community – it has highlighted for me what we, sadly, don't have in Poland anymore."

"Kuba's understanding of the issues in Polish society – and in fact in the wider Eastern European world – will bring an added perspective to his new role."

NEW LEADERSHIP at the United Jewish Campaign



Helen Schneider

Being the main fundraising body for Cape Town's Jewish community, the United Jewish Campaign is responsible for providing financial support to 35 beneficiary organisations within the community. These organisations offer services and support to the Jewish community in numerous different ways: from welfare to cultural activities to education, among others.

Considering the significance of its role and the size of its operations, heading the organisation requires a person with significant skill and experience. And that's exactly what has led to the appointment of Helen Schneider as the UJC's new Executive Director. The first woman to hold this position, Helen takes over from Barry Levitt, who recently retired after many successful years. With Barry's wealth of experience, he will remain as part of the UJC team in the capacity of Senior Fundraiser.

In addition to holding an MBA from the University of Stellenbosch Business School, Helen climbed the corporate ladder to high levels prior to moving to the UJC in 2021. She worked in the retail sector for 20 years, gaining experience in operations and project management positions, and then spent a number of years with a leading multinational cosmetic company, as Commercial Director.

Helen is enthusiastic about her role. "I took a bold step to embark on a fresh career journey and discovered a sense of purpose at the heart of an incredible community."

The project management experience, together with her background in marketing and sales, has already served her well at the UJC.

While moving from a corporate environment in the commercial sector to the non-profit sector may be a big change, Helen is enthusiastic about her role. She explains that, "I took a bold step to embark on a fresh career journey and discovered a sense of purpose at the heart of an incredible community."

When Helen first joined the UJC, she did not anticipate the extent of the complexity of the community. As she enthuses, "I'm thrilled to be within such a dynamic community, and to learn from the wisdom and expertise of our lay leaders."

She is similarly appreciative of the impact of the Chair of the UJC, Lance Katz, whom she sees as a significant enabler of change and is clear in his vision of empowering the people within the organisation.

Having worked closely with Barry and all the UJC stakeholders for the past 2 years, Helen is well-versed in what her role entails, and she is confident about the future of the UJC.

We wish her every success in the role!

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ISRAEL: So much more than a site of conflict

Israeli visitor to Cape Town, Gusti Yehoshua-Braverman, stresses that Israel must communicate far more about the country as being a treasure trove of new developments and innovative thinking - and not just perpetuate the media image of the country as the location of ongoing conflict with the Palestinians. As Head of the Department of Irgoan and Israelis Abroad for the World Zionist Organisation, she was here for the iVision Innovation Conference organised by the SA Zionist Federation (Cape Council).

"Israel stands out as a country known for innovation," Gusti explained. "It's part of the history of the Jewish people. After all, Herzl's vision of creating a state for the Jewish people successfully moved from a dream to a reality. Bringing together people from 30 different countries, from 30 different cultures, with numerous languages, and moulding them into a new nation took a great deal of innovation."

And an understanding of the importance of innovation has driven the State of Israel to focus on the concept in very real ways. Eliezer (Moodi) Sandberg, the keynote speaker at the iVision Innovation Conference, an entrepreneur and former Minister in the Israeli Government, highlighted that Israel's investment in research and development is much higher than in other countries. And there is a notable focus on science in higher education in the country – and this has resulted in the country producing eight Nobel Laureates in the field of science, a number way out of proportion to the size of the population of the country.

The focus on science education is clear in the numerous educational facilities established in the country with a focus on science: the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Haifa Technion, and the many scientific research bodies within the military.

Today, Israel is particularly successful in the field of tech innovation - and it's staggering to consider how many of the most significant tech developments stem from the country. From the RSA Protocol, which allows one machine to talk to another one; to the M-Systems DiskonKey (the USB stick); to the Intel Mobile Processor – core in the development of the laptop; to VoIP; to 3D printing – the list is endless.

Over and above the innovations in the computer field, tech innovation in medicine has been a significant feature, too. And the Waze driving app was developed by an Israeli, too.

Spurred on by its belief in Tikkun Olam ('Heal the World'), the country is keen to share its innovations with other states. This is noticeable in the export of agricultural technology, such as the concept of drip irrigation, which was also invented in Israel, and in innovations relating to the use of water resources. And the country has so much more to offer the world!

Cape Town entrepreneurs, Leora Hessen, and Mark Levitt, participated in a panel discussion at the conference. The most important message from both of them is that Artificial Intelligence, the metaverse, blockchain technology and other features of the world of tech are where the future lies.



David Cohen, Chairman – SAZF Cape Council; Leora Hessen, entrepreneur; Gusti Yehoshua-Braverman, WZO; Heather Blumenthal, Director – SAZF Cape Council; Mark Levitt, entrepreneur; Moodi Sandberg, Israeli entrepreneur. Picture credits: Guy Lerner and Marc Wyllie.



Diller Teen Fellows Cape Town: Cohort 9's new beginnings

By EYTAN LABE – Diller Co-ordinator



Diller Teen Fellows Cape Town Staff Team 2023: Danielle Munitz and Mikey Hendler (Junior Councillors) and Eytan Labe (Co-ordinator)

Diller Teen Fellows CT is thrilled to usher in the New Year with the arrival of Cohort 9, a group of 20 remarkable teenagers who have embarked on an exciting and transformative journey. With a rigorous selection process that drew over 50 applicants, the anticipation for this new cohort has been nothing short of exhilarating.

As we welcome these talented and enthusiastic young leaders into our programme, we can't help but feel a sense of responsibility. Our mission at Diller Teen Fellows is to leave a lasting impact on the lives of these teens, fostering growth in the realms of leadership; Jewish identity; and Tikkun Olam, the concept of repairing the world.

Throughout the upcoming year, we will closely follow Cohort 9's experiences and accomplishments. Their monthly highlights will provide us with glimpses into their personal growth, the connections they form, and the positive changes they bring to their communities.

We extend our warmest congratulations and a heartfelt Mazel tov to Cohort 9 as they embark on this incredible journey. We look forward to witnessing the extraordinary transformations and accomplishments that lie ahead as these young leaders embrace their roles as Diller Teen Fellows. Here's to a year filled with learning, leadership, and making a meaningful difference in the world.

Celebrating September!

By JESSICA CONNÉ



Bnei Akiva Cape Town's newest Shlichim, Shlomo and Maytal

Bnei Akiva Cape Town had an extremely eventful September!

As always, we rocked our Second Sunday activities and had a blast during our primary school visits, saying hello to our awesome channies at Herzlia Highlands, Herzlia Weizmann and Phyllis Jowell.

We celebrated Akiva, Ayelet, Gali and Lee-Am's incredible contribution to Bnei Akiva South Africa at their community farewell party hosted by Morasha Shul, where we also said our goodbyes and wished them *הילצ'ב* (good luck) for

their adventures back home in the Holy Land.

We also welcomed Bnei Akiva Cape Town's new Shlichim, Shlomo and Maytal Goldberg! We cannot wait to see the amazing work they will do in Cape Town and are so excited to have them join our Bnei Akiva Cape Town family!

We look forward to the amazing memories and achievements that 5784 may hold for Bnei Akiva Cape Town!

Wishing everyone a Shana tova umetukah and a healthy, joyous year ahead!

Shabbos on Machaneh

By JEFFREY GUTMAN, Rosh Chinnuch 2023

As Machaneh draws closer, preparations for the year's big event ramp up. One of the major parts of Machaneh that everyone looks forward to is Shabbos so we thought we'd tell all those who haven't experienced a Shabbos on Machaneh exactly what we do on Friday and Saturday.

Starting early Friday evening, each shichva has a chance to reflect on the week that passed by hosting a Shabbos event for their own shichva. This involves telling the story of the parasha for that week, hosting an awards ceremony, singing Shabbos songs and allowing the channichim to reflect on what they've learned and experienced that week.

Following that, each channich has the opportunity to attend a service of their choice such as an Orthodox service, a Reform service, Shabbos through text (analysing seminal texts on the Sabbath and parashot), and a cultural service. After enjoying the services, we all gather on Kikar Rabin - the main centre of the campsite - and feast together on a delicious shabbos meal.

The festivities continue on Saturday, when a Shabbos brocha is held, consisting of delicious pastries and breakfast foods. Following that, two sessions of limmudim are held in the morning and afternoon. We manage to get world-class speakers to host talks, ranging from ex-madrichim, rabbis and international guests talking on specialist topics. Finally, in the

evening, we end Shabbos with Havdalah on Kikar, which consists of a massive dance party where everyone can just let loose and kick off the week with

old-fashioned fun and dance.

We look forward to having you experience a truly Habo Shabbos! Sign up on our website www.habo.org.za

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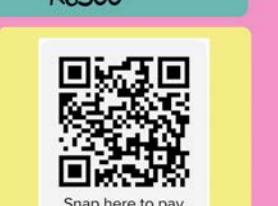
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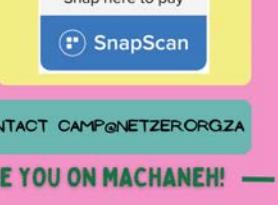
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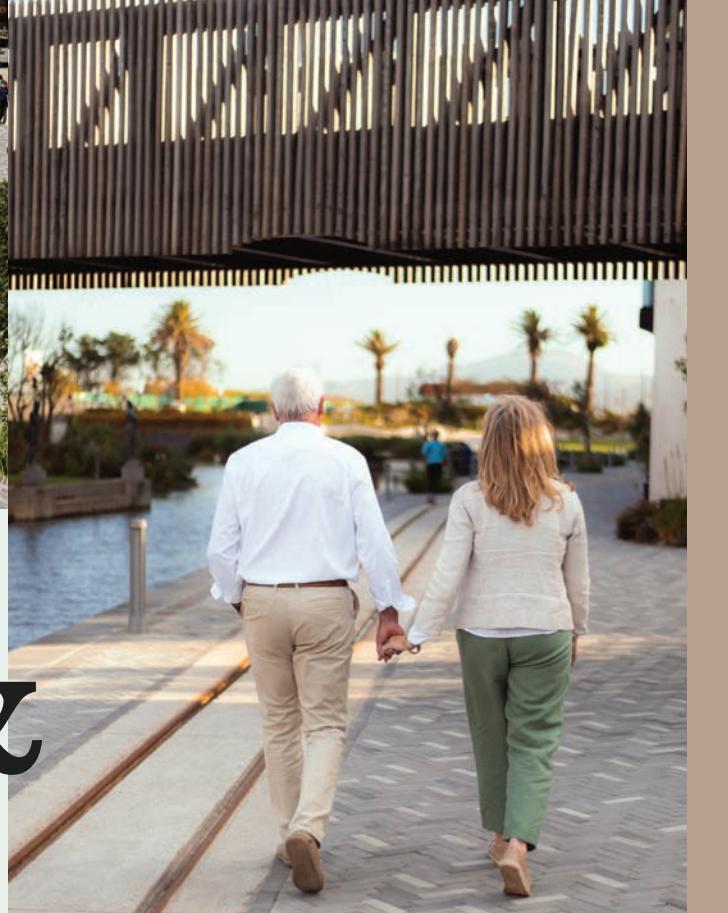
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CONSIDER THIS

All my bones shall say, “Eternal, who is like You?”

BY RABBI MALCOLM MATITIANI



Every culture and religion has its own posture and gestures for prayer. Thus Christians kneel with their hands pressed together, Muslims lie

prostrate and Buddhists sit cross-legged with their hands pressed together. The habit of swaying rhythmically to and fro or side to side is the Jewish expression of prayer. Whether sitting or standing, the Jewish worshipper accompanies their prayers with the physical act of shokeling, a movement that seems to come naturally.

The twelfth century poet and philosopher, Yehudah Ha-Levi, provided a practical explanation for the practice of shokeling in his famous work, the Kuzari. Before the invention of the printing press in 1440 by Johannes Gutenberg, scholars relied on handwritten manuscripts to study Torah and siddurim were also produced in this labour-intensive manner. The expense of these texts resulted in one book being shared by ten or more students or worshippers. Some leaned forward to get a glimpse of the text while others leaned back, resulting in the eventual development of the rhythmic movement associated with Jews at prayer.

According to the Talmud (Berachot 31a) when Rabbi Akiba recited the Tefillah on his own he would prostrate and genuflect so much that he would start praying in one corner of the room and finish in another. His shokeling was so intense that it would lengthen his praying time. Thus out of deference to his fellow worshipers he refrained from this activity when praying with a minyan.

The 14th century Spanish rabbi, David ben Josef ben David Abudraham, in his commentary on the liturgy entitled Hibbur Perush ha-Berakot ve-ha-Tefillot explains the origin of shokeling as the literal fulfilment of Psalm 35:10: Kol atzmotai tomarna Adonai mi chamocha? “All my bones shall say, ‘Eternal, who is like You?’”. Like the Psalmist the pious Jew prays with their entire being, both physical and spiritual. Following the example of Rabbi Akiba, Hasidim utilise

dance as a means of worshipping the Creator, a practice which was mandated by Yehudah heHasid in his ethical work Sefer Hasidim.

The Zohar (Soncino Zohar, Bemidbar, Section 3, Page 219a) compares the Jewish soul to a lamp that is kindled by words of Torah so that its flame burns continuously. The perpetual motion of this flickering flame is physically manifest in the continuous swaying to and fro during the recitation of prayers and the study of Torah.

The kabbalistic metaphor likening the Jewish soul steeped in Torah to a kindled lamp is based on Proverbs 20:27: “The life breath of humankind is the lamp of the Eternal” and expresses the idea of true worship. While I am not suggesting that everyone must shokel when praying, the act of worshipping God with one’s entire being – whether by literally swaying to an internal rhythm or on a purely intellectual level – is admirable. Such uninhibited immersion in the moment allows the worshipper to rise beyond the mundane world to a plane of holiness and wholeness, leaving him or her with a sense of deveikut, “closeness” to God. This state of being is more conducive to the sacred task of tikkun olam - repairing the world through our actions and our words.

The second verse of the Shema could be understood as an injunction to worship God with all one’s being: Ve-ahavta et Adonai be-khol levavecha u-ve-khol naf-shecha u-ve-khol me-odecha, “You shall love the Eternal your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might”. By expanding his or her intellectual and spiritual reverence for God into the physical world, the observant Jew worships God through physical acts of Tzedaka for the betterment of humanity and the earth. The warmth of the metaphorical flame symbolised by bodies swaying to and fro during prayer is thus actualised in the concrete world.

As we enter the third month of the New Year may we too extend our inner worship of the Almighty into the outer physical world of our daily life by opening our hearts and extending our hands to those in need.

Tashlich and water

On the 10th of September, Temple Israel braved the weather on Hout Bay beach and joined Tikkun HaYam’s global Jewish beach clean up. Tashlich involves symbolically casting away our sins into a body of water, but during Reverse Tashlich, instead of casting away our sins, we come together to remove harmful pollutants from the water, fostering a sense of responsibility for the environment. This practice combines the spiritual reflection and renewal associated with Tashlich with the tangible act of environmental conservation.

A week later, Tashlich was held in the centre of town at the Molteno Reservoir, with Table Mountain and Lion’s Head as the backdrop providing a dramatic setting for doing the work of letting go. Rosh Hashanah is a period of self-introspection, and Tashlich requires that you review your behaviour over the last year before you can cast away your sins. This year, standing next to the reservoir that provides many in the city with drinking water, we were aware, not just of the work that we need to do individually, but also as a city in making sure that everyone has access to water.



Gathering for Tashlich under Table Mountain



Emma Nasson, Lyn Kawitzky and Eve Kawitzky participating in reverse tashlich



Emma Nasson, Wendy Nasson and Diana Sochen with their bags of litter

SIMCHAT TORAH MAGIC
Service, hakafot, dinner, live music

FRIDAY
6 OCTOBER
AT 6.00PM
TEMPLE ISRAEL
GREEN POINT

SATURDAY
7 OCTOBER 9.30AM
GLENDALE HOME OR
TEMPLE ISRAEL GREEN POINT



Rabbi Greg blowing the shofar at Tashlich



Casting away



Cape Town Torah High's "Think Big" Indaba From Ukraine to the Metaverse

As an international school, Cape Town Torah High believes that it is imperative to teach global competency, to give students the chance to explore global issues while working on their own ability to work as changemakers in a diverse, interconnected world.

With this in mind, every year, Cape Town Torah High holds a three-day Indaba aimed to broaden students' learning experience to the important things that the curriculum is not always able to teach. This year the theme for the Indaba was 'Think Big'. It focused on the concept of global competence, preparing students for a global, interconnected world. The workshops and talks covered a huge variety of topics from the crisis in Ukraine to the future of the metaverse. Students and teachers were engaged, challenged and inspired by industry experts and community leaders.

The first day began with the focus on the ethics of influence on social media with talks from Sarah Feldman and Rabbi Goldman. After that, we took a digital trip to Zhitomir to hear from Rebbetzen Esther Wilhelm about the crisis in Ukraine, and how this affected her community and family. The day closed with the boys running a beach clean up in Milnerton while the girls debated climate change and 'bal tashchit' and then closed with an 'ask me anything' session with Rabbi Cannon.

Day 2 opened our minds with an exploration of Web3, AI, and the metaverse with Leora Hessen and the CSO educating us around the dangers of fake news, cyberbullying and social media predators. After a short break, we explored the beauty of diversity, looking at the dignity of difference with Rabbi Thurgood, and a powerful Charter for Compassion workshop. After that it was the girls' turn to run the beach clean up while the boys hosted the much anticipated climate debate. The boys then closed their day with an 'ask me anything' session with Rabbi Cannon.

The final day was an eye-opening inspiration session, looking at cryptocurrency and investment with Matthew Osrin. After that, Caroline Kaimowitz and Liat Beinart

from Staffwise hosted a powerful workshop focusing on the skills needed for the 21st century. We then hosted a lively game show challenging our students to share their global knowledge.

The Indaba closed with a look to

the future for our students, South Africa and the world with Lance Katz at a schoolwide assembly, with a powerful vision of hope, charging the students to work hard, and hone their personal agency, and appreciate our community and all it has to offer.

The Indaba was dedicated in the memory of Andy Greenberg OBM, a young woman who passed away far too young, and in appreciation for all that her family has done for CTTH over the years.

We cannot wait for the Indaba 2024!



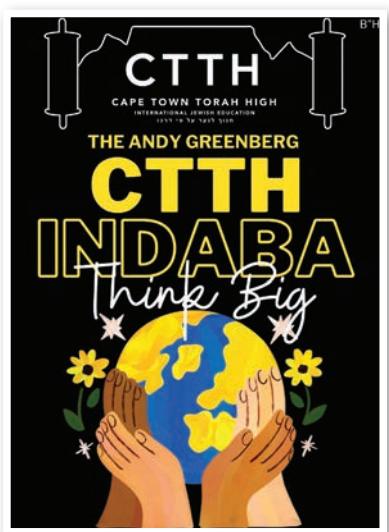
Boys running a beach clean up in Milnerton



Indaba welcome pack



"Charter for Compassion" exercise



Indaba Programme



The girls' turn to run the beach clean up



SCHOOL SHOES for Parkfields Primary School



SAJM

South African Jewish Museum

When children come to the museum wearing school uniform, it isn't always easy to see how under-resourced some of them are. But their school shoes often tell the story. Therefore, the SAJM does an annual school shoe drive at the end of the year (Thank you, Herzlia Highlands).

However, the Grade 7s from Parkfields Primary School in Hanover Park came to visit in the heart of winter, and we noticed many children wearing broken school shoes or takkies.

We asked Rabbi Feldman from the Gardens Shul to help us fundraise for new shoes for the children. He was onto it like a flash with the idea of a soccer tournament between the shuls from the Rabbinical Association of the Western Cape (RAWC). He enlisted the aid of shul member, Lindsay Sterne, who organised a fabulous Sunday tournament in a matter of two weeks. The rabbis rallied their teams, great fun was had, and money was raised.



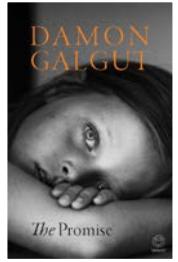
On 31 August we went to visit the Parkfields Grade 7s and Grade 3s. Rabbi Feldman chatted and sang with the kids, and we all celebrated with the kids who were receiving their new shoes. Parting words from their teacher, Mr Eric van der Byl, were, "The singing rabbi was a hit!"

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our fundraiser. We look forward to doing ever more to build bridges between communities.

BOOK TALK



THE PROMISE by Damon Galgut



Internationally acclaimed author Damon Galgut's Booker Prize-awarded novel, *The Promise*, was published to huge acclaim in recent years. And, now, it's been adapted for the stage in a production that promises to receive equal acclaim.

The world premiere opening night of the production took place on 19 September, and you can see it during the rest of September until 6 October at Cape Town's The Star Theatre at the Homecoming Centre (formerly The Fugard Theatre).

This incredible production was adapted from the book by Damon Galgut himself, in collaboration with Sylvaine

Strike, who also directs the production.

The story: On a small farm outside Pretoria, the Swart family – "a typical bunch of white South Africans" – tries to hold itself together through the violent lurches of recent history. They have promised to give a small piece of land with a tiny house on it to Salome, the Sotho woman who has worked for them her whole life. A worthless property, but still, they will not give it up.

Are they cursed, or just unlucky? One by one, members of the family die, while everything around them changes and they try to stay the same. Only two siblings will

eventually be left, facing each other across a great divide: Anton, the tormented older brother, and Amor, his strange younger sister – the family member key to a promise made to her Jewish mother years earlier.

The author spoke at the opening night performance of his immense gratitude to the funders of the play, which took over two years to complete. Jewish Capetonians Derek and Janet Lubner, who now live in London, have shown a commitment to the arts in their former home country through their very generous funding of the production.

Don't miss this production – it makes for both an entertaining and very thought-provoking evening of great theatre.

Bookings can be made at Webtickets – www.webtickets.co.za

The Jacob Gitlin Library has two copies of *The Promise* available for lending.

THE PHOEBE BOOK OF POEMS FOR CHILDREN by Patricia Schonstein

'Be kind to all creatures, great and small'. This is the succinct message given to children by a little dog named Phoebe on the opening page of *The Phoebe Book of Poems for Children*. She presents as an ambassador for goodwill towards other species.

In real life, Phoebe survived horrific torture at the hands of misguided, poorly educated children. Her experience prompted South African businesswoman, Sarah Clayton, to establish The Cactus Foundation Africa. This, the foundation's first publication, is by South African novelist Patricia Schonstein. Its colourfully illustrated pages conjure up an animal-rich African wilderness, pristine oceans, and domestic settings against which poems prompt young readers toward the beauty and fragility of nature. Schonstein's collection, a creative blend of rhyme, rhythm, empathy and kindness, will do good service both in the classroom and at home. It will be invaluable for young children who might be sensing the despair of climate collapse and the desecration of nature.

Cape Town writer, Patricia Schonstein, will present her book to children at the Jacob Gitlin Library, on 4 October, when she will talk about animal care and read poems from the book.





A “toil” of a Brooklyn farmer Rabbi

By JOSHUA MIKUTIS



JOSHUA MIKUTIS is the Director of Design and Jewish Learning, Rabbinic Director of the Weitzman-JDC Fellowship at JDC Entwine. He was ordained from the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in May of 2018; he also graduated with a Master in Jewish Nonprofit Management from the Zelikow School of Jewish Nonprofit Management.

As I dug into the compact soil, I realised that my many years of schooling did not properly train me for farming. But here I was in South Africa doing my best to help toil the land.

What brings a 30-something-year-old Brooklyn-based Rabbi, whose closest interaction with the soil is a tendency to doom a houseplant, to Cape Town to volunteer in the township of Langa? I have the privilege of working for JDC, the world's oldest and largest Jewish humanitarian organisation, which in addition to saving Jewish lives and building Jewish life, engages in non-sectarian projects around the world, and since around 2021 in South Africa.

Leveraging and deploying Israeli Agtech to parts of the developing world, JDC has sought innovative ways to support and empower those on the margins of society to a better future. In South Africa, JDC has partnered with Jewish organisations, Mensch, Ripples for Changes, and the Jewish Board of Deputies to support vulnerable populations.

As part of my work with JDC Entwine, the young adult platform for JDC, I staffed a trip that brought 20 American Jews to learn about the history of South Africa, its Jewish community, and to engage in the work of JDC and its partners.

This took us to Langa to volunteer with the South African Urban Food and Farming Trust (SAUFFT), one of JDC's partners in its Imagine More Initiative which works to improve food security among women. SAUFFT is developing a series of AgriHubs, to support small scale urban farmers to best farm their plots of land in Cape Town and other centres.

This was how I ended up as a temporary farmer. We joined a group of local farmers who are developing their own small plots in hopes of increasing their food access. We listened as these farmers told their stories about what inspired them to engage with the AgriHub—they shared their triumphs and struggles to grow produce in incredibly challenging soil.

We then split into small groups and joined a farmer who instructed us on their needs: A dentist grabbed a wheelbarrow, an architect filled it with soil, and I, the farmer Rabbi, stood waiting to dump the soil onto the patch of land. None of our volunteers had

farming expertise—we were guided by our hosts and did our bit to help. And so it was that a bunch of American Jews, toiled and spread the soil, and then planted beans and other vegetables.

Whenever one volunteers in an unfamiliar context, one may walk away uncertain about impact. So, we were heartened when informed that our collective work had saved the farmers a total of three weeks of labour: we had made a change. Most importantly, our small work gave us the privilege to peek into the lives of the stalwart farmers of Langa and the remarkable Jews and others who are working to make South Africa a better place.

Rabbi Tarfon in Pirkei Avot, notes that, “The day is short and the work is plentiful.” But he followed that gloomy sentiment with the instruction: “it is not your duty to finish the work, but neither are you free to desist from it.”

We should take inspiration from the partners of Mensch and JDC, who do the quiet, hard work of transforming lives for the better. I did not leave South Africa a farmer. But I have a renewed appreciation for the Jewish spirit which refuses to desist from improving the world, one plot of farmland at a time.

It's time again for...



Sunday
19 Nov 2023



We caught up with Mensch for a Mitzvah Day snapshot

What's Mitzvah Day all about?
Each year, in November, over 40 000 people around the world come together to give their time, not their money, to make a difference to the community around them. Mitzvah Day introduces people to social action – setting up volunteering projects to address real needs.

How is Mensch involved?

Mensch is the Southern Africa partner of this global initiative run by Mitzvah Day UK. In short, we make it happen in South(ern) Africa – with the purpose of curating, growing and, where possible, deepening the impact of Mitzvah projects throughout the year.

How does it work? How do people get involved?

Via the Mensch Network, Mensch

supports the work of over 100 Jewish South African changemakers running organisations or projects that benefit our wider more vulnerable communities. We start by asking these members' 'Beneficiary Partners' what they need.

We then share these needs with our Jewish Community who are the Volunteer Partners in a project. Volunteers can be shuls, schools, corporates, friendship circles, clubs, individuals – anyone and everyone. A Mitzvah Day Project is then created together. Alternatively, volunteers can identify any beneficiary they'd like to support and contact Mensch to help create the match and ideate project ideas.

Mensch supports all projects via logistical and creative guidance;

international link-ups; marketing; and continued impact beyond the day itself. Mensch ensures Mitzvah Day is a fun, impactful and well organised event that deepens our connection to all South Africans and across all faiths.

If people can't do something on the actual day, are there other options? Absolutely! We know it's a busy time of year, and that Sundays don't work for everyone. While we encourage all mitzvot to be done on this day, you can run your mitzvah on another day in November. Please contact us to discuss.

What do you say to people who want to volunteer, but don't know where to start? Ah, that's easy – Just call us!! We have projects you can join, or if you prefer, we can help you create a project.

WHERE do projects take place?
Mitzvah Day projects happen at various locations across South Africa. The location is the choice of the Volunteer and Beneficiary Partners, and dependent on the type of activity being run.

Can businesses do a Mitzvah Day project as a TEAM BUILD?
Yes! Great idea!
And better still, the Mitzvah Day project can align with the business's CSI strategy and profile.



Cape Jewish Seniors Association

DIRECTOR: Diana Sochen 021 434 9691 director@cjsa.org.za ADMIN: Amanda 021 434 9691 admin@cjsa.org.za search CJSA on Facebook

Moving into Spring and starting afresh

How wonderful it is and how lucky we are that there is always something that we can look forward to. I hope that you have all enjoyed the High Holy Days with the various services and special times to be near to your loved ones while participating in the time-honoured traditions that are passed down through the generations.

Now that the High Holy Days are drawing to a close, we have the opportunity to look forward to the wonder of Spring with warmer weather, longer days and the exquisite beauty of new buds on the trees and plants beginning to flower. Our members have already had the privilege of driving out into the country to see the spring flowers which they were able to enjoy even though the weather was not at its best.

October will see a group enjoying the hot water springs at Goudini – the first time since COVID – and I know that those who have booked are really looking forward to the experience. Apart from the hot springs, there will be opportunities to experience the beautiful Worcester Valley, enjoying a lunch at a well-known vineyard. One of the highlights of the break is the special braai that the Lions Club of Worcester hosts for us on the final evening – once again we look forward to this.

The activities at our branches are being enjoyed with members attending the regular sessions with guest speakers, the art and activity mornings, and the weekly outings, which are all thoroughly enjoyed and often oversubscribed. Everyone who attends seems to appreciate what we have on offer. It is always gratifying to all of us when we get to know that our efforts are appreciated.

Developing Appreciation

It is so easy to let each day slip through without giving a thought or appreciating life's pleasures. It is also easy for us to forget about the wonders we can experience each day. We need to open our eyes and become aware – to awake from our unconscious sleep. By looking for things to experience and feel grateful for, we can spend less time on auto pilot. Instead of just going through the motions,

being conscious of the good things that happen in our lives enables us to feel more positive about what is currently going on as well as looking forward to things in the future. Being appreciative also gives us more energy to tackle difficult tasks and realise that there is always something to be grateful for.

In order to appreciate anything, it is really important to appreciate the self. A great many of our problems in life occur because we don't always appreciate ourselves. Developing appreciation for ourselves allows us to see our potential as well as our problems. We discover that, even though we are not perfect, there is still immense value and beauty in who we are. This is reassuring. Being open and honest with ourselves helps us to be open with others. We learn that we can relate to others based on the goodness and beauty we discover in ourselves. And, in doing so, the results in our life are both enormous and startling.

When we open our hearts enough to include ourselves and let go of our harsh judgments, something wonderful happens within. You will find that it is easier to focus on things that you appreciate, and you will increase the happiness and positivity in your life and your relationships.

Diana Sochen, Executive Director

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL

We congratulate our members who have had joyous occasions during the last month.

BIRTHS

Jean Tocker – great-grandson
Joan Fisher – great-grandson
Jacqui & Andy Rogers – grandson

BIRTHDAYS

Rahle Kuritzky – 90th
Avril Rappaport – 75th

BARMITZVAH

Reuben & Sheila Wagenheim – grandson



Rabbi Sam Thurgood at Rosemary Magid's 99th birthday celebration



Dorit Segal, Hillel Goodman and Cheryl Salkinder enjoying the outing to the flowers



Marge Lee enjoying the flowers in Darling



Milnerton members enjoying Chair Exercises



Judy Kramer, Carrie Clift, Cheryl Salkinder, Dorit Segal, Ruth Carneson, Bridgette Flanagan



Muizenberg members enjoying an outing to Laced Coffee



Three sisters, Gillian, Sharma and Marion, enjoying Rosemary's special birthday celebration



Joan Sarembock and Cecile Buirski enjoying a morning at Laced Coffee

Veronica Belling – grandson
Cheryl & Paul Salkinder – grandson

ENGAGEMENT

Alec & Thelma Cohen – granddaughter

MARRIAGE

Rosebeth Becker – granddaughter,
Freda Tucker – grandson

WELCOME to new members

Bridget Flanagan

WELL WISHES to those who have been under the weather

Carrie Clift, Shirley Kaplan, Gabi Robinson

Our wishes of strength to those who have recently lost loved ones:

Ackerman Family on the passing of Raymond Ackerman.

Rabbi Greg Alexander and Student Rabbi Andi – passing of Rabbi Greg's father, Peter.

Sisters of member Harold Friedman on his passing.



EXPECTATIONS EXCEEDED

@ ELIOT OSRIN LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE'S (EOLI) ETHICS SYMPOSIUM ENTITLED: Living & Engaging Ethically: Invoking our Moral Responsibility

With Elul being a time of reflection and introspection, it was an appropriate time for a reset, and so this debut event was pitched around the themes of apology, reconciliation, and forgiveness. The Symposium also served to celebrate five years of EOLI's impact on leadership development.

Meticulously crafted by the Director of the Eliot Osrin Leadership Institute, Viv Anstey, and Abigail Smith, EOLI Team Ethical Leadership, the symposium took place during late August, and brought together a number of leading thinkers and speakers. The event was facilitated by social justice activist and editor of the Maverick Citizen in the Daily Maverick, Mark Heywood.

Participants responded to the themes of the event, according to delegate Barbara Nussbaum, by trying "to make sense of the complexity that we live with in South Africa."

As another delegate Sue Kramer explains: "This symposium served as an appeal to our sense of humanity, a call to our moral obligation to ourselves and others, and a drive for us to take up the human obligation to have the difficult conversations, to engage and to lead, and to live ethically with conscience."

Sue explains that the speakers offered powerful messages "reminding us that we must develop a vision for a shared future, a society for all who live in it, and a reminder to us that we can be a part of that shared vision."

The symposium highlighted the need for us not to turn away from the difficulties we encounter but that we should face them, engage in them, heal the scars of the past, and remember the importance of working together for humanity in whatever way we can.

The Symposium was a resounding success! The goal for this Symposium was to create an environment for leaders and others to curate tough conversations now and in the future, that promote growth, transformation, and change.

WHAT WAS SO SPECIAL ABOUT THIS INGATHERING?

Most noteworthy is the fact that it attracted an inter-generational audience. Many delegates



Myra Osrin with Rabbi Greg Alexander



EOLI – The audience listening with rapt attention

commented that, "The noticeable contingent of youth was especially refreshing." And so, too, were the many new faces in the jam-packed auditorium of 120+ who had rallied to listen, engage, challenge and shift paradigms. They signed up expecting to sit with discomfort and ready to reflect. The event attracted a diverse profile of age, stage, and life experiences, evidenced by their readiness to see and affirm one another. The programme structure and speaker line-up enriched the debate and dialogue, sharing stories, memories, pain, perspectives, all with a call to action! This is the beginning of a journey, powered by The Eliot Osrin Leadership Institute.

CHERYL HENDRICKS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION | CONFLICT AND PEACE EXPERT

THIS DISQUIET CALLS FOR INTROSPECTION, LEADERSHIP AND ACTION

MARK HEYWOOD

EDITOR OF THE DAILY MAVERICK'S MAVERICK CITIZEN | SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVIST

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP & COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY - CREATING AN ETHICAL SOCIETY

DENNIS DAVIS

RETIRIED JUDGE PRESIDENT OF THE COMPETITION APPEAL COURT | LAW LECTURER | AUTHOR

CULPABILITY AND PAYBACK - LEGAL PERSPECTIVES FROM THE HOLOCAUST AND THE TRC

GREG ALEXANDER

TEACHER | RABBI | FACILITATOR OF JEWISH TEXTS AND EXPERIENCES

THE LIMITS OF FORGIVENESS - DEEPENING OUR UNDERSTANDING AND ACTIONS

NADIA LUBOWSKI

FOUNDER OF THE ANTON LUBOWSKI EDUCATIONAL TRUST | CURRICULUM DEVELOPER

COMPLICATED LEGACIES - MAKING SENSE AND SEEKING MEANING

ALBIE SACHS

FORMER CONSTITUTIONAL COURT JUDGE | ACTIVIST | WRITER

SOFT VENGEANCE AND THE MORALITY OF JUSTICE - LESSONS FOR LEADERS

COMMENTS FROM SOME OF THE ATTENDEES:

Sasha Rodenacker

"The crossover between a youthful and more experienced audience made for engaging discussions.

"Almost three decades into the new South Africa, many of the systems and structures which govern our society reflect those of the previous regime. Addressing these issues head on in our community is an extremely valuable space to create."

Sheila Valentini

"I had recently returned to South Africa from a brief trip abroad and was feeling very despondent due to the recent riots, both in Cape Town and rural Swellendam. I have never felt that way before. The symposium came at a good time and heartened me.

"Hearing Dennis Davis balance the young Jewish UCT law student's perspective of the TRC with the historic context of the time – a time that, may I add, the majority of the group lived through – afforded me a dual focus lens, so to speak, and challenge some perspectives on both sides. I realised that South Africa is sitting on exponential trauma. Not only is there the trauma of the first generation, but also the trauma of being raised by those with trauma (2nd generation trauma) while still experiencing current traumas."

Barbara Nussbaum

Barbara commented on having joined Rabbi Greg Alexander's group discussion, in which he shared the story of Simon Wiesenthal who was asked to give forgiveness to a dying SS soldier during the Second World War. She comments: "The gift I took away from this remarkable evening was my own commitment to act on and my own response to Rabbi Greg's workshop and actively find collaborators to go beyond discussions about forgiveness and towards the healing of collective trauma - for all South Africans and even

within our own Jewish Community."

Sue Kramer

"I chose Mark Heywood's session as I wanted to take reflection into action. The title of his talk was Active Citizenship and Collective Responsibility – creating an Ethical Society."

Nina Kovensky

"I was impressed with the inclusion of young participants, who were fully engaged in the symposium and brought the views of the future leadership into the discussions."

Caryn Gootkin

"I attended the breakaway session facilitated by Judge Dennis Davis. The session focused on the TRC and its effectiveness or lack thereof in healing the harm caused by apartheid. Judge Davis masterfully introduced the topic before inviting comments and thoughts from the group. The session was incredibly moving because it wove together the thoughts of the older and younger members of the audience, with excellent insights from the students who interact with those affected by the intergenerational trauma of apartheid on a daily basis."

Adrienne Jacobson

"The session led by Nadia Lubowski and Albie Sachs was a powerful and emotional session, sharing narratives and the unpacking of survival, trauma and lessons in resilience. Nadia shared her story of losing her father when she was a young girl, and being mercilessly bullied and cast out in the broader and forbidden context of a political and moral witchhunt and murder. And Albie, a political freedom fighter, subjected to torture, incarceration, exile and survival. Their insights demonstrate the impact of how we make sense of trauma ... and how it informs empathy."

For more information on The Eliot Osrin Leadership Institute visit: www.osrinleadership.org



HEALTH FOCUS

GENETIC CONDITIONS under the spotlight

By KARA STOLER

**KARA STOLER (KS),
a genetic counsellor
in Johannesburg,
spoke to the Cape
Jewish Chronicle
about genetic
conditions that are
common amongst
South African Jews.**



KARA STOLER, Genetic Counsellor, Johannesburg

Eva, a young poet uncovers her high genetic risk for breast cancer and navigates the decision to remove her breasts preventatively. How much will this affect her identity?

Cape Town poet Jordy Sank has partnered with Gabriella Blumberg from Johannesburg in a new film venture, 'Volle Bors' (BARE), produced by Sanktuary Films. The short film is based on Gabriella's personal story: her discovery that she carries the BRCA genetic mutation – which has a high prevalence among Ashkenazi Jews – and the nuance of emotions that came with making tough decisions relating to preventative measures to remove the risk of being afflicted with breast cancer.

With her own experiences informing the fictional story she wrote, the film premiered recently at the Silwerskermfees – where it won BEST SCORE – and will be available for the public to view on Showmax. Gabriella had always been aware that breast cancer was prevalent in her family, going back many generations. She watched family members battle with breast cancer and, when she was 18, she decided to go for genetic counselling, which confirmed that she tested positive for the BRCA1 mutation.

According to Kara, about one in three Jewish people carry a common Ashkenazi genetic condition. These conditions display autosomal recessive inheritance and so carriers do not display symptoms and there is typically no family history. A BRCA1/BRCA2 gene mutation follows a dominant pattern of inheritance so just one family member could pass it to the next generation.

Q CHRONICLE: What are the most common genetic conditions that have a high prevalence among the Jewish population?

KS: There are 27 conditions that we test for among Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews. These are conditions that are fatal in early childhood or would be seriously life-threatening conditions – ones that would significantly impact the affected individual's quality of life.

The ones more commonly known among South African Jews are cystic fibrosis and Tay-Sachs Disease (recessive conditions). The carrier rate for a Tay-Sachs mutation is fairly high, with 1 in 25 Jews being a carrier. Similarly, with cystic fibrosis the carrier rate is 1 in 29.

The BRCA1 and BRCA2 mutations are dominant genes that are also prevalent among Ashkenazi Jewish women (and men). The incidence is high among Ashkenazi Jewish women relative to the rest of the population: 1 in 40 Ashkenazi Jewish women carry it, while only 1 in 400 have it among the wider female demographic.

We must remember, too, that men can get breast cancer and may also be at an increased risk for other cancers, so the BRCA mutation should not be seen as only affecting women.

Q CHRONICLE: How would someone know that they may carry one of these genes?

KS: We recommend that every couple considering starting a family should undergo Ashkenazi genetic testing. Generally, there is no family history of a condition unless a baby is born affected through two carrier parents. This is why it's so important for any couple embarking on the path to parenthood to go through a testing programme. Genetic testing can help identify vulnerable couples who are at risk of having affected offspring with a fatal or life-threatening condition.

Couples who carry mutations for the same condition can have healthy offspring through preimplantation genetic testing which is performed in conjunction with IVF. A couple's embryos will be screened for a specific condition and only healthy embryos, without the mutation, are implanted. Other unaffected embryos will then be frozen for future use so that a couple is confident that they will deliver a healthy baby.

Genetic counselling is also important to determine an individual's risk for other conditions such as an inherited cancer syndrome. (Ovarian cancer is also a common cancer associated in women who carry a BRCA mutation.) If there is a strong family history of

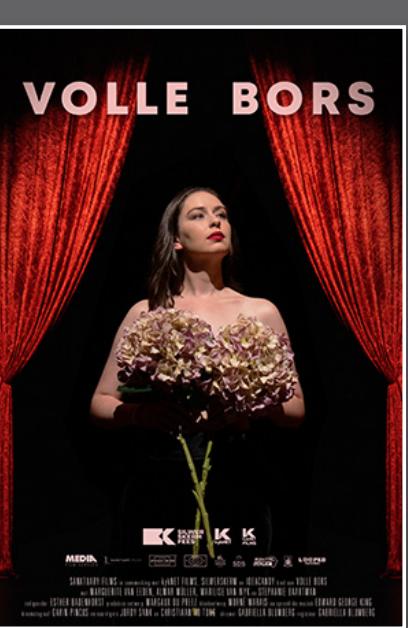
cancer, typically at younger ages, with a number of family members and related cancers, this may put someone at a higher risk for carrying a genetic mutation.

The story of Gabriella Blumberg and the BRCA genetic mutation is an example of this: she chose genetic counselling because she knew she was at risk of breast cancer since others in her family had developed it previously. The tests we did proved that she carries the genetic mutation, and so this allowed her to take preventative action to reduce the risk of developing breast cancer. (See box below).

Q CHRONICLE: In the case of a woman who carries the BRCA gene, is an elective mastectomy the only preventative measure that can be taken?

KS: Today, screening through mammograms and sonar would help with the early identification of the disease – and treatment at that stage can be highly successful. A woman at risk should probably have screening tests every six months to ensure early detection if the disease does indeed present. It is important for an individual to consider prophylactic risk-reducing surgery if they carry an inherited cancer gene.

Everyone's risk factor is different and that is why it is important to speak to a genetic counsellor to determine your risk. The counsellor will refer you to a specialist medical practitioner if appropriate.



Follow @sanktuaryfilms to stay up to date with film screenings.

THE MEDITERRANEAN ISLAND OF RHODES

- a paradise ended



Lina Kantor and Rabbi Naftali Silver

By 1944, it was clear that the Germans were unlikely to win the War. As such, the need for slave labour to produce goods for the German war effort had dimmed and, with time running out, the Nazi goal of eradicating the world of all Jews became paramount. It is against this backdrop that the decimation of the Jewish community of the Island of Rhodes (Rhodos) should be understood.

Jews had lived on Rhodes for centuries, dating back to the Inquisition of the 15th and 16th centuries when many Jews fled Spain and Portugal, rather than face the terror of conversion or death by burning at the stake.

At the beginning of the Second World War, Rhodes fell under Italian rule. The Italians had ruled the island from 1912, having replaced the Ottoman Empire as the power in control of the island. With this history, the Jews of Rhodes held mostly either Italian or Turkish citizenship, a crucial distinction in terms of who would live and who would meet their end.

In September 1943 German forces invaded the island, defeating the Italians. The next year, they embarked on the destruction of the Jewish community, rounding up the approximately 2,000 Jews, and sending them on a long, arduous journey to Auschwitz. Almost all were murdered immediately.

Among the few survivors were 39 Jews who held Turkish citizenship. As Capetonian Lina Kantor (Amato) explains, her grandmother had refused to give up her Turkish citizenship during the rule of the Italians, and this helped save her parents. It was through the bravery of the Turkish consul, Selahattin Ülkümen, that those with Turkish passports were saved from annihilation. They continued to live on Rhodes throughout the rest of the War, enduring significant hardship

under German rule. But, they were among the very few who survived the War.

The actions of the consul, as well as those of a Christian Italian couple, Girolamo and Bianca Sotgiu, who took Lina in and passed her off as their own child, must be acknowledged as acts of bravery and conscience.

A few of the survivors, together with others from Rhodes who had gone to live in the Belgian Congo before the War, eventually settled in Cape Town in the 1960s, and established the Sephardi congregation here.

These events were commemorated by the local Sephardi community during August at an event held at the Sephardi Shul in Sea Point. Speakers included survivor Lina Kantor (Amato), and Tom Chesno, a young descendant of a survivor. His maternal grandmother had lived on the island, too.

The Jews of Rhodes held mostly either Italian or Turkish citizenship, a crucial distinction in terms of who would live and who would meet their end.

In addition, two 4th generation great-grandchildren of two other survivors also spoke at the commemoration. Herzlia Weizmann Primary School learners, Eden Hessen and Olivia Closenberg, committed to keep the stories of their great-grandmothers, Stella Israel and Violette Fintz, alive.

Memories of the vibrant Jewish community of Rhodes continue to be celebrated by the descendants of survivors, even though they did not ever live there themselves. The destruction of this community should never be forgotten.



4th generation survivor, Noah Closenberg, aged 7, looks at the candles commemorating 6 million Jewish lives taken



NAVIGATING THE TEENAGER STRESS MAZE

JCS@WORK – TIPS FOR HELPING YOUR TEEN DURING THE EXAM PERIOD

RHITA RUSSON
Social Worker

Exam stress can take many shapes and forms for both parents and teenagers. What's important is being able to recognise when your teen is stressed and preventing your own stress from affecting their behaviour.

By creating a calm and supportive environment for your child during exam periods, you will be helping them put their best foot forward for each examination.

Make sure your teen has a designated space in your home for study. Ideally, this will be somewhere quiet and removed from the rest of the family, where they can shut the door and concentrate.

Assist them in setting up the space to minimise distractions. This may involve agreeing on a rule that their mobile phone is left outside the room. It could also involve ensuring other family members, especially younger siblings, know the study space is off limits between specific times while your teen is studying.

It is vital for you and your teen to understand each other's expectations when it comes to study and examination outcomes. Their expectations of themselves and your expectations of them may differ, so getting it all out in the open before the exams begin, will benefit everyone in the long run.

Your child maybe placing a lot of pressure on themselves to get high marks because they think that is what you expect of them, when this may not be the case. Conversely, your child may expect to do a half an hour of revision every day, and continue socialising with their friends as normal, while you may be expecting a bigger study commitment from them. Having discussions around behaviours and outcomes during and after exams will help you and your child manage expectations so complications don't arise when examinations are underway.

One of the best examination preparation tips for parents is to have an honest conversation with your child about stress triggers and how

to cope with these. As a parent, you are probably aware of the tell-tale signs that your teen is stressed. Make sure you are on the lookout for these during exam time and talk to your child about how you can support them when these situations arise. It is important to know whether your teen wants your attention when they are stressed, or if they would prefer to be left alone.

Chat about coping mechanisms they can put in place to combat stress. It may involve taking time out to go for a walk and clear their head or simply listening to calming music. It could be talking through what they are stressed about with you, to get a second opinion and/or reassurance. Everyone has different coping strategies for stress, and it is best to talk these through, so you know how best to support your teen.

Exam stress tips for parents revolve around one central idea - the parent being the calming presence. Children are incredibly perceptive when it comes to picking up on their parents' emotions. Two stressed people in the same household will only increase tension and make exams even more difficult. For this reason, make sure you take time for yourself too - relax and reset so that you can be there to offer support whenever your teen most needs it.

Jewish Community Services wishes the Matrics of 2023 the best of luck in their final Matric exams.

If you would like any further assistance regarding this article, or any stress related issues, please contact JCS on **021 462 5520** or email info@jcs.org.za.

"Having discussions around behaviours and outcomes during and after exams will help you and your child manage expectations so complications don't arise when examinations are underway."



#JewishCommunity #JCS #ExamStress #Teenagers #SocialWork



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warm and
healthy
Sukkot."**



CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE

The Cape Jewish Chronicle
wishes all our readers
and their families

Chag Sukkot Sameach

CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE

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ABUSE OF THE LAW for political motives: 'Lawfare' is the new form of warfare against Israel

By BONNY FELDMAN

Israel's opponents have embarked on a different approach to damage the country. The method is one called 'lawfare' – the abuse of the law for political means.



UK barrister, NATASHA HAUSDORFF

Visiting English barrister and Head of UK Lawyers for Israel, Natasha Hausdorff, recently visited South Africa as a speaker for Limmud Cape Town Conference. She offered a hard-hitting analysis of the attitude of international bodies to the State of Israel during a talk she gave at a breakfast event organised by the SAZF Cape Council.

Hausdorff explained how assaults against Israel have shifted in recent years. While violence was the focus of attacks on Israel for many decades, both full-scale warfare and violence through terror attacks have not achieved the goal of eliminating the Jewish homeland. And so, Israel's opponents have embarked on a different approach to damage the country. The method is one Hausdorff called 'lawfare' – the abuse of the law for political means. She believes that the cases brought before these international bodies are based on

falsehoods and the manipulation of international law.

The term reflects an approach in which cases are brought to international bodies such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), purportedly based on law. In many of these instances, according to Hausdorff, there is no factual basis in law for the cases. They are political, not legal, issues.

However, whether or not the case eventually proceeds and is successful, the benefits to those bringing the cases – for instance, Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) – are in the public relations field. The media attention generated is such that Israel is depicted negatively, so there is a victory for those bringing the cases.

In addition – and perhaps equally worrying – is that lawfare creates

'pseudo international law that operates on a double standard concerning the Jewish state'. The acceptance and usual basis for making new law is being cast aside as new law is developed from what should never have been accepted as fitting within the realm of international law in the first place. In other words, the base of the law is legally invalid, yet the base is being used to develop new regulations.

Where the ICC is concerned, Hausdorff raises questions about jurisdiction. She explains that where the Palestinian Authority has brought cases, the fact that the court accepts the cases means it is not correctly applying the rules around jurisdiction. The plaintiff must be a state to bring an action, but the Palestinian Authority does not meet the requirements to be classified as a state. As such, its actions should not be heard.

Hausdorff also refers to the UNHRC and its Standing Agenda Item 7,

defined as covering 'Human rights violations and implications of the Israeli occupation of Palestine and other occupied Arab territories.' No other country in the world – except Israel – is subjected to a stand-alone focus on the body's permanent agenda, ensuring its prominence and the notoriety of its target at every council meeting.

A further focus of concern is the UN blacklist, a database of firms identified by the UN as contributing to human rights abuses. But, Hausdorff explains, it singles out Israeli companies and is geared to damage the country's economy. Most of the businesses listed on this database are from Israel, yet numerous companies based in other countries with abysmal human rights records have been excluded.

Hausdorff, a potent advocate for Israel, also presented at the Limmud event held a few days after this breakfast event.

And loving

JULIAN RESNICK writes from Israel



JULIAN RESNICK was born in Somerset West and grew up in Habonim Dror. He studied at UCT, and made Aliyah in 1976. He's conducted numerous shlichuyot and educational missions on behalf of Israel, to Jewish communities in England and the USA. He works as a guide in Israel and around the world (wherever there is a Jewish story). He's married to Orly, and they have three children and seven grandchildren and is a member of Kibbutz Tzora.

I travel a lot with people, especially here in my home of the past 47 years, Israel.

I guide all types of individuals and groups. People who have been here before, but often a long time ago when they were teens, when they were in effect other people. I guide multi-generational family groups, grandparents, their children, and grandchildren. (These are wonderful groups to guide as there is nothing more special – and I say this a grandfather of seven wonderful Israeli little ones – than seeing the pleasure grandparents get as their grandchildren begin to understand, both intellectually and emotionally, where they are and what it is all about. I see them glow with pride as their grandchildren discover that they belong to this foreign place they have traveled to, often from so far away.)

I travel with people who have come here to understand the politics, the history, the biblical context. I love introducing Israel to them and them to Israel, and time and time again I hear the same response from so many of them when I ask them, especially the first timers, what surprised them most about Israel.

No, it is not the lack of camels in the streets; it is not the incredible variety of topography, climate, landscapes in such a tiny country. It is not when they find out that the people around them come from the four corners

of the earth (many of them before coming here have not even heard of some of the countries represented by the Jewish People when we came home).

It is not even the amazing hi-tech ecosystem they encounter here – they were sort of expecting it. Many have heard of the “Start Up Nation” before setting out on their journeys.

Most people cannot get over the energy of Israel.

This is a country that has gone through so much. Filled with people who started their lives as refugees or as people who needed to make decisions about their future when times became uncomfortable for the Jews, for us, often in places which had felt like home for so long, which had taken in their parents as refugees from somewhere else, or places whose identities had changed and whose new identities had little place for their Jewish minorities. (Amos Oz famously recounted the story of his father who had grown up in three different countries as a child, but had always slept in the same house as a child.)

This is a country where the newcomers and the old timers alike have lived through so many traumas: The traumas of terror and wars; of painful loss; of periods of great material want and need.

And yet, there is this incredible energy, buoyancy, ability to keep

on dancing, singing, partying here, which can be only called extraordinary.

There is a well-known Israeli song which includes a line which in itself is not especially noteworthy but, when placed into the context of what it has meant to live here over the years, can only be called impressive. The line goes, “We will not stop singing”.

A different version of this line once stood on a small memorial in Tel Aviv, which will hopefully return when the city finishes building the new water sports center on the beachfront near the Charles Clore Park (find it on your Google Maps please).

It read, “We will not stop dancing.”

On Friday, June 1st, 2001, during the Second Intifada, a Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up in the middle of a line of young people waiting to get into the discotheque in the Tel Aviv Dolphinarium. Twenty-one young people died.

Devastating.

And yet the message was as clear then, through the mist of the incredible pain, as it is today.

We have no choice.

We have to continue both singing and dancing.

And loving.

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CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE



ENTREPRENEURS' HOTSPOT

ENTREPRENEURS' NETWORK provides support to Cape Town entrepreneurs

It's tough running one's own business, and so entrepreneurs can see significant benefit from outside support. It's something that South African Jewish businesswoman, Dawn Nathan-Jones, is fully conscious of. And it's one reason behind her drive in 2022 to establish an organisation called Entrepreneurs' Network (EN), a joint project of the Cape SAJBD, ORT Jet Cape Town, Entrepreneurs' Organisation (EO) and Over the Rainbow. As Dawn says, "Research shows that eight out of ten entrepreneurs fail within the first 18 months, so we decided to do something about this staggering crash-and-burn statistic. Entrepreneurs supporting Entrepreneurs is at the heart of what EN is about."

Offering a range of services to assist local entrepreneurs - including access to useful resources, the opportunity to listen to successful businesspeople, and mentorship - a regular feature on the EN calendar is networking opportunities.

A recent networking event was held at Deloitte Cape Town's offices, and it proved to be a valuable experience for everyone. In addition to learnings gained during a facilitated session for the entire audience of close to 70 business-owners, smaller group sessions were held. These were led by a number of Jewish entrepreneurs, who had so much to share with the attendees.

The Cape Jewish Chronicle spoke to one of the group leaders, Sid Peimer, of Stratplanning Cape Town, a former CEO of the Cape Chamber of Commerce, after the event.

Sid points out that networking has limited value if you are meeting only people from within your community. "You need to gain social capital from being networked with all types of people, especially those from outside your usual circle," he explains. "The idea is to get fresh insights, and those are more likely to come from people outside of your immediate circle or your own community."

The EN event highlighted this distinction. It brought together entrepreneurs from all sorts of backgrounds and industries –

from a township food-supplier, to the provider of a platform for software developer staff, to a designer of luxury building interiors, for example - and across genders. Some have fairly well-established enterprises, while others are just trying to get their business off the ground - and can benefit from the guidance of those who have been through and survived the early periods in their business life.

In addition to attending an event like the networking evening organised by EN, Sid recommends that entrepreneurs exploit networking opportunities with so-called 'weak ties', i.e. people who are not close friends or colleagues, but people who would accept an invitation for a coffee with you. He says that, "Research shows that those networks can be extremely valuable – but you have to activate them. All it takes is an email or phone call. People actually like to help others – it makes them feel valuable. The most flattering thing anyone can say to me is, 'Sid, what do you think?'"

Sid comments that, "The structure of the networking at the EN event was at a level that can only be described as A-grade supercharged networking for incredibly valuable social capital." As such, there were no doubt new contacts created for many of those who attended the event, and many will have someone to turn to for guidance in the future.

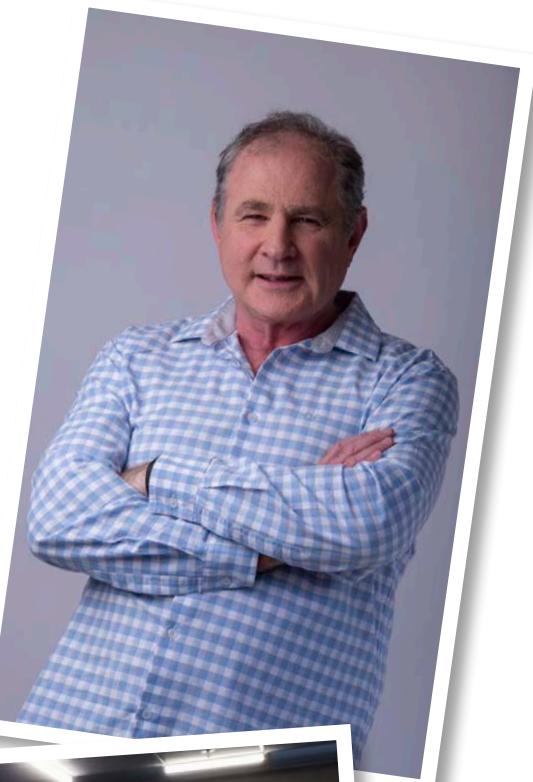
The benefits work across the board. A seasoned, experienced business figure and entrepreneur, Sid himself gained from the event, commenting that, "It was a growth experience for me as well, as it was somewhat challenging to dispense valid advice on the spot. But these are

the things that challenge us to make us better businesspeople."

If you've started your own business and see the value of being supported by other businesspeople, EN may just be the right fit for you. Visit the EN website to find out more:

<https://www.enkapetown.com/>

Sid Peimer



ORT Jet Cape's Liza Sandler, facilitator, Dillon Jearey, and Dawn Nathan-Jones of Entrepreneurs' Network



Facilitator Glen Heneck in conversation with participants, including entrepreneur Mel Cook



Enjoying some humour – Rael Phillips facilitated one of the groups



A large crowd participating in the Entrepreneurs' Network event

Cape Town's SOCCER-PLAYING GIRLS shine at US tournament



Cape Town participants Amy Distiller, Izzy Abrahamson, Ruby Snaid and Luna Beyhan (captain of soccer team)

Being exposed to people from different countries and backgrounds is so important for a young person's development. And a group of South African teenagers had this opportunity during August when they participated in the JCC (Jewish Community Centres) Maccabi Games in Fort Lauderdale in the USA. The South African youngsters participated for the first time in this annual event held in different US cities.



Over 1500 Jewish teens, ages 12-16, representing communities from across the globe, come together for an unforgettable week of competition, community service and social activities. This event included athletes from the USA, Canada, Israel, Argentina, Mexico, Ukraine, Great Britain and South Africa. It is an ideal forum for athletes to create Jewish connections, friendships and memories to last a lifetime.

The JCC Games targets a slightly younger age group than the traditional Maccabi Games in Israel, which appeals to Maccabi SA, since the organisation is able to broaden their services. The South African team was an all-female one made up of girls 7v7 soccer and a dance group.

The soccer team included some Cape Town girls, all of whom attend Herzlia: Amy Distiller, Izzy Abrahamson, Ruby Snaid and Luna Beyhan.

For Luna Beyhan, this was a great tournament. In addition to being chosen as captain of the soccer team, she was crowned as the top goal scorer of the tournament. In her role as captain, Luna was also appointed flag bearer for Team SA for the Opening Ceremony, following in the footsteps of many accomplished Maccabians who have been awarded this honour throughout Maccabi SA's 87 year history.

The trip ended on a high when Team Maccabi SA was awarded the JCC Midot Medal by Ana Ehrlich, head of the JCC Fort Lauderdale Games. The Midot Medal is presented to the team or athletes that demonstrate JCC Midot (values) including respect, kindness, Jewish peoplehood and Tikkun Olam.

Congratulations to all the members of the two South African teams!

ART AND technology

combine at HERZLIA WEIZMANN PRIMARY SCHOOL



Herzlia Weizmann Primary recently held an interesting exhibition of children's art - but with a difference. In addition to the art on display, other elements of the school curriculum for each grade were incorporated in the exercise, providing an integrated learning experience that incorporated a range of parts of the curriculum.

The artwork was displayed along a gallery walk and, as one walked along, paper with QR Codes accompanied particular displays of art. Art, Music and Drama performances were linked to a curriculum topic for each grade. Parents could scan the QR codes relevant to their child/ren, then watch these performances on their devices.

The concept was developed by Calene Kruger, Herzlia Weizmann Primary's Drama teacher, and involved the support of most of the other teaching staff. The idea was to create a truly integrated experience,

with the academic curriculum as the centre and the stimulus.

The artwork was conceptualised and displayed by Zoe Sher, Talia Eales, Hayley Gibbs and Jacqui Zacks, all of whom teach art at Weizmann. In addition, there was performance work which was organised by Calene Kruger (drama teacher) and Albert Karating (music teacher). Other staff members got involved in filming videos and in working with the technology to generate QR codes.

In addition to the learning that took place in terms of the academic elements and the art, drama and music, the children were fascinated by the QR Codes, which they scanned and watched with great interest and enjoyment! They learned that a theme can be expressed in many different ways, be these via the written or spoken word, song or visual arts. The experience has been an overwhelmingly positive one.



Artifacts of Mapungubwe



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CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE

A routine checkup

By CRAIG NUDELMAN



A former Capetonian, CRAIG NUDELMAN is now based in Sydney, where he has settled into Australian life with his wife Gabi, and two daughters, Jessica and Livi. He works for the Jewish Communal Appeal and enjoys singing as a member of Sydney's Central Synagogue choir and the Sydney Philharmonia Choir. The Cape Jewish Chronicle is privileged to continue to receive regular articles written by Craig.

It's been six months since we immigrated to Sydney, and one of the questions people are still asking Gabi and me is "How are you settling in?". It's a hard question to answer, but we approach it by considering how we're living. Maybe the marker of how settled we are is what the structure of our days look like, and whether we have a routine.

In my first column after landing, I wrote about finding a rhythm and routine in our new country. The reason for this is that routine is extremely important for Gabi and me, and for our two girls, Jessica and Livi. For the children, routine is framed by when school starts, when break (or 'recess' as they call it here) is, and how long the periods are, followed by extra murals and homework (and reading stories before bedtime). For us, it's about making sure the children go to school, going to work, fetching the children, feeding the children, putting the children to bed, and putting ourselves to bed after some downtime.

According to many mental health experts, routine is extremely important to ensure you have a stress-free life. Without routine, the chaos and unpredictability of how a day may flow can be very stressful and bad for one's mental health. Routine can help us feel more in control in the frenetic world in which we live, where so little is in our control – government policies, our favourite sports team's performance in World Cups or leagues, and wars taking place across the world. Some might see routine and structure as

limiting. But I know from my two stints of unemployment that a lack of routine can lead to depression, apathy, and a lack of purpose.

Psychologist Dr Rachel Goodman, who works at NYU's School of Medicine, explains that structure is necessary to limit those negative feelings: "If people don't have structure and are sitting around with less to focus on, then they also probably will find themselves thinking about the stressful situation more, which can also lead to additional stress and anxiety." Other benefits of routine, according to various studies, are lower stress levels, formation of good daily habits, taking better care of one's health, and feeling more productive and focussed. Regular bedtimes, mealtimes, exercise regimes, and staying in touch with family and friends regularly all assist in creating a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

Judaism is also centred around routine. From daily prayers to the holidays and holy days, Judaism's focus on the routine of day-to-day living is indeed something to look at favourably. I can't say I am observant of most of Judaism's laws governing how to live life as a Jew, but I appreciate that it ensures stability and control. Shabbat dinner has been a big help in our settling in Sydney. Our stable base of my brother-in-law and my sister-in-law's family and our weekly meals are important for our end-of-week routine.

We've tried to create a flexible framework to provide stability and structure during this tumultuous

period of settling into a new country. It's a way to embrace change while also maintaining a sense of continuity from our past life.

So, on paper, it seems as though routine is good, and that we have indeed settled in well. However, I think the one mitigating factor is that sometimes a routine can become boring. When I first started work, I was quite excited to catch the bus and train every day; to be on public transport which worked well was novel and exciting. However, it has now become a bit tedious to wait for the bus, especially if it's running late back home.

I remember when I was in hospital for my epilepsy monitoring and preparation for surgery. The routine was the bane of my existence. The nurses would begin waking us up at around 5 am, breakfast was around 7 am, and then the rest of the day hinged on mealtimes. The nursing staff taking my vitals, and the changing shifts all created this terrible, repetitive pattern, mixed in with me not having any seizures and being stuck in a permanent loop. A year on, I'm glad I did it. I would do it again, but, boy, it was a shocker.

Routine is an amazing way to settle into a new country and lifestyle, and perhaps my family and I should regroup and see what routines we can start so that we create even more stability and structure in our days.

May your 5784 be free from uncertainty and negative disruption.

Chag Sukkot Sameach!

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Making bread and breaking bread together: Jewish girls in Cape Town get together to bake Challah

Photography: EMMA-KATE LEVIN



The girls having fun with the dough



Lots of flour



Chana Deren, second from left, with other girls at the Challah Bake



The group of girls who participated in the Challah Bake

Preparing a young person for adult life encompasses a range of learnings, and an important one is to provide guidance on career choice. In fulfilling its responsibility as an international high school, Cape Town Torah High has developed a unique programme geared to expose learners to career opportunities within the local Jewish community.

According to Daniella Conibear, General Studies Principal at the school, "We find that our learners are eager to learn about the range of community organisations in Cape Town. We hope that through this programme our students have the opportunity to see community organisations as opportunities for employment, volunteering or philanthropy in the future. It's quite an eye-opener when they learn about the possibilities."

The school initiated the Litrom be-yachad programme in 2019, and it runs throughout the three years of the high school period. It's a graduation requirement that all learners have to complete. "The programme involves a number of elements," Daniella explains. "Each learner has to spend a few days doing a work shadow exercise with one of the community organisations. Through this, the young person learns about what the organisation's focus is, and meets and works alongside people who have chosen

to follow their particular career in the organisation. The end result is that they learn that, just as in the private sector, there are career opportunities in tech, HR, marketing and communications, management, accounting, and so on. But they also see that there are additional career opportunities, such as in security, fund-raising, kashrut, archival work, librarianship, and many others."

One Grade 12 learner, Chana Deren, responded with great enthusiasm to the programme. She explains: "I decided to job shadow different members of the UJC to learn what it really takes behind the scenes to run and oversee an entire Jewish community. I came out of it knowing a lot more about the work that the UJC does, and how we as youth are needed for building our future here."

In fulfilling the other requirements of the Litrom be-yachad programme, Chana organised a Challah Bake event, with the aim, she explains, of "uniting Jewish high school girls in Cape Town, from different high schools and backgrounds. Hours after hours of preparation, from fundraising to shopping, marketing, to decor arranging, reaching out to girls, to budgeting – and everything in between – resulted in a most beautiful, warm night where Jewish high school girls from St Cyprian's, Herzlia, CTTH, Reddam House, Camps Bay High School, and homeschooled all had the chance to come together and bond through the special Mitzvah of Challah.

These comments from girls who took part in the Challah Bake reflect the success of the initiative:

Rebecca Widan, Reddam House: "I loved this Challah Bake to meet and connect with all Jewish girls who are similar ages to me, especially coming from a non-Jewish school."

Layla Chiat, Herzlia: "I don't often take the time once a week to bake challah for Shabbat but this event pushed me out of my comfort zone and made me realise how relaxing and meaningful making challah truly is!"

Tali Zolty, CTTH: "Chana Deren's idea to join Jewish teen girls, from all over Cape Town, together in one room for a special Challah Bake, was absolutely phenomenal. It was incredible to see friends from other schools whom I haven't seen in so long, and also to get the opportunity to know them more!"

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